

Message Text

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EXDIS - SPECAT FOR MILITARY ADDRESSEES

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, IC, US
SUBJ: IDF RETENTION NEGOTIATIONS: NAVIGATIONAL AIDS FOR
THE CROSSWIND RUNWAY

1. DEPT OF THE NAVY HAS CONCLUDED NEGOTIATIONS WITH ICE-
LANDIC PRIME CONTRACTOR FOR CONSTRUCTION OF RUNWAY NAVIGA-
TIONAL AIDS PROJECT WHICH WAS AUTHORIZED AND FUNDED IN
FY-1973 MILITARY CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM. IN ADDITION, NAVY
PLANS TO REQUEST ADDITIONAL FUNDS IN FY-1975 PROGRAM FOR
INSTALLATION OF TWO TRANSMISSOMETERS WHICH, TOGETHER WITH
NAVIGATIONAL AIDS TO BE CONSTRUCTED, ARE REQUIRED TO OBTAIN
CATEGORY II CERTIFICATION. ESCALATION IN CONSTRUCTION COSTS
WILL BRING TOTAL NAVY AUTHORIZATION IN FY-1973 TO DOLS 1.6
MILLION. DOD IS NOW PLANNING TO INFORM KEY CONGRESSIONAL
COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN BY LETTER THAT OUR POSITION IN NEGOTIA-
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TIONS WILL BE CONSIDERABLY STRENGTHENED IF ICELANDIC PRIME
CONTRACTOR PROCEEDS WITH CONSTRUCTION PROJECT AND THAT US
DELAY WOULD SERIOUSLY PREJUDICE NEGOTIATIONS.

2. GIVEN STATE OF PLAY IN IDF NEGOTIATIONS, A COMPELLING CASE CAN BE MADE FOR DELAY IN CONSTRUCTION OF RUNWAY NAVIGATIONAL AIDS WHILE NEGOTIATIONS ARE IN TRAIN OR UNTIL WE HAVE CLEARER IDEA ABOUT FUTURE OF THE BASE. THERE IS LITTLE QUESTION THAT NAVIGATIONAL AIDS WOULD BENEFIT ICELANDIC AND OTHER COMMERCIAL AIRLINES MORE THAN USAF OR NAVY. IF RECOMMENDED, CHAIRMEN OF CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES CONCERNED

WOULD MOST LIKELY AGREE TO A DELAY IN CONSTRUCTION PENDING CONCLUSION OF BASE NEGOTIATIONS, AND IF GOI COMES UP WITH NEGOTIATING POSTURE RESEMBLING THAT ALREADY PROPOSED BY COMMUNIST ELEMENTS IN GOVT, WE WILL HAVE DIFFICULT TIME EXPLAINING WHY WE CHOSE TO PROCEED BEFORE GOI POSITION SATISFACTORILY CLARIFIED.

3. WE HAVE IN MIND THAT FONMIN AGUSTSSON WAS INFORMED LAST OCTOBER THAT US NAVY WOULD GO AHEAD WITH CROSSWIND RUNWAY AND DEDICATION TOOK PLACE ONLY A SHORT TIME AGO. THE IPC ALSO MADE CONCESSIONS TO THE US IN THE NAVIGATIONAL AIDS NEGOTIATIONS, AND AGREED NOT TO INCREASE THE CONTRACT PRICE FOR ANY FUTURE WAGE OR PRICE ESCALATION OR KRONER REVALUATION. WE UNDERSTAND THAT ICELANDIC MEMBERS OF DEFENSE COUNCIL HAVE BEEN PRESSING FOR ACTION ON THE NAVIGATIONAL AIDS WHICH WOULD SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVE AIRPORT OPERATIONS AND BE BENEFICIAL TO BOTH ICELAND AND US.

4. WE WOULD APPRECIATE EMBASSY'S VIEWS AND COMMENTS SOONEST ON PROS AND CONS OF DELAY IN CONSTRUCTION AND OF TYING THIS ACTION TO BASE NEGOTIATIONS. AT VERY LEAST, PROBLEM SHOULD BE DISPLAYED TO PM AND FOREIGN MINISTER WITH VIEW TO DEMONSTRATING TO THEM DIFFICULTIES ENGENDERED BY UNCERTAINTY HERE AS TO HOW THEY VIEW OUR EFFORTS TO MEET GOI INTERNAL NEEDS. KISSINGER

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